



Childhood Connections

October 1, 2024

Roads to Success

Throughout 2024, the Office of Childhood (OOC) will share “Roads to Success,” a collection of stories from professionals and higher education institutions. Stories from professionals feature achievements from people working in childhood programs such as home visiting, early intervention, child care, Head Start, preschool, and afterschool. Stories from higher education institutions highlight colleges and universities who are using innovative methods to support and grow the early childhood workforce. There are many roads to success. It is important to highlight the varying and unique pathways professionals take and how higher education programs can pave the way. These stories are also available at the bottom of [the Early Connections webpage](#).



Photo Credit: UMKC

This month’s Road to Success focuses on Angela Hall, the Family Services Manager with the Missouri Valley Community Action Agency in Carroll County. When Angela graduated high school, she immediately joined the workforce and after eight years, she decided to pursue a degree.

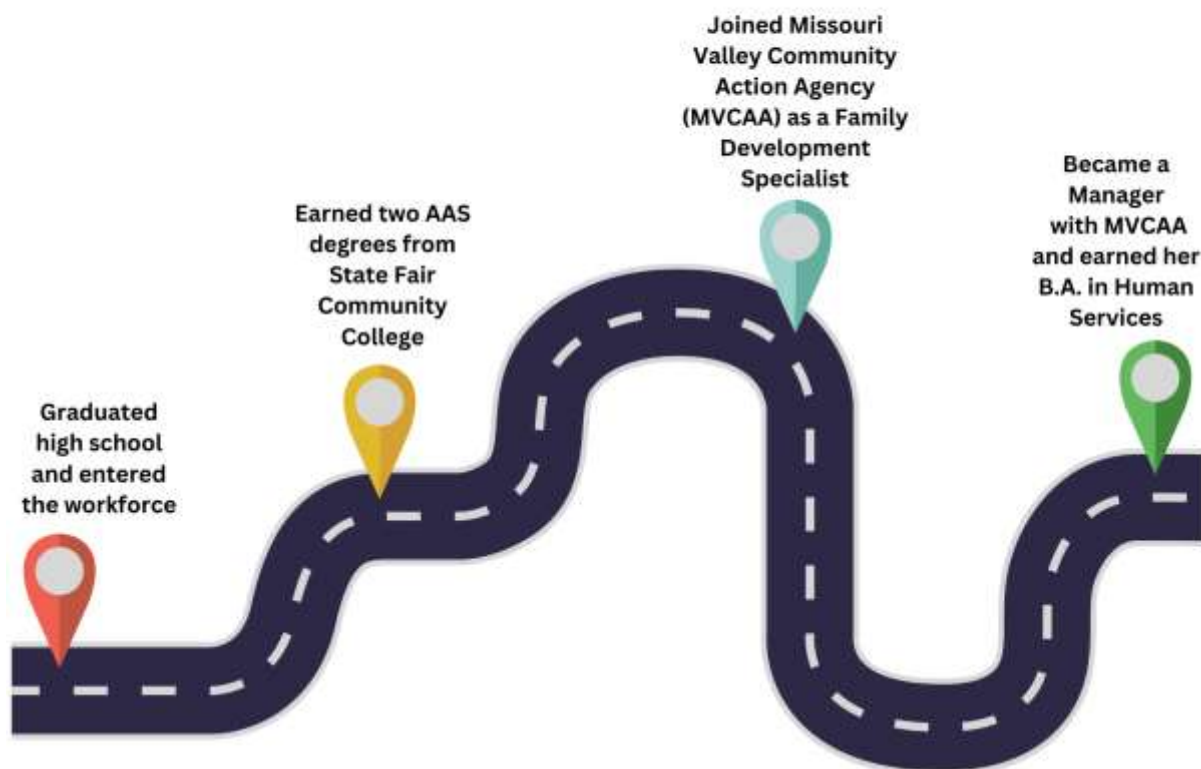
She began classes at State Fair Community College and graduated in December 2007 with two Associates of Applied Science in Business Management and Marketing and Retail Specialty. She began working for the Missouri Valley Community Action Agency as a Family Development Specialist and over the next five years, Angela worked with families in their homes in Saline County. In June 2011, she earned her Family Development Credential.

During this time, Angela’s supervisor saw her potential for leadership and began preparing her for a managerial role. This included training new Family Development Specialists, attending a leadership academy, and becoming an advisor for the Family Development Credential program. As Angela began working toward her bachelor’s degree, she moved into a coordinator position before becoming a supervisor and then a manager. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Human Services from Columbia College in 2020.

Angela’s goal as a manager is for her Family Advocates to have the same feelings she did after working with families at home visits: joy and fulfillment from

helping those in need. She still runs into people in her community who are excited to see her and remind her that she helped them earn their GED, get a job, or accomplish a goal. Angela believes Family Services is all about taking small steps that can lead to big positive outcomes.

Here is what Angela's road to success looks like!



NEW! First Steps Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Reports Posted

Annual reports outlining First Steps program revenues, expenses, and service costs by System Point of Entry (SPOE) region are now available on [the First Steps webpage](#).

The First Steps program is operated through five funding sources: state general revenue, federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grant, family cost participation (FCP) fees, private insurance, and public insurance (MO HealthNet/Medicaid). These sources create a system of payments that is administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

To learn more, visit [the First Steps program webpage](#).



NEW! Early Childhood State Advisory Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Early Childhood State Advisory Council (ECSAC) will be held on **Tuesday, October 15, 2024, at 12:30 p.m.**

Notice! The October meeting will be held at a different location: MO Department of Natural Resources, 1730 E. Elm St., Jefferson City, MO 65101.

NEW! Statute Change for Licensed School-age Programs

Effective August 28, 2024, section 210.275, RSMo, was updated to no longer require licensed school-age programs to be located and operated on elementary and secondary school property. The statute continues to limit what DESE can regulate for school-age only programs.

To learn more about what DESE can regulate for school-age programs in a licensed family home, group home, or center, please visit [the Rules and Laws webpage](#).

Please contact a Child Care Compliance Inspector or [a Regional Office](#) with questions.

NEW! 2023 Early Care and Education Stakeholder Survey Report

The 2023 Early Care and Education Stakeholder Survey Report is now available. In 2023, over 200 stakeholders responded to the annual online survey to help the OOC measure the outcomes of the Preschool Development Grant and strategic plan progress. Participants included parents, community stakeholders, school districts and more.

Visit [the PDG webpage](#) to learn more about the survey results.

NEW! MOPD Navigators

OOC and its contractor, University of Missouri-Kansas City, are working to improve user satisfaction for professionals who call or email asking for help with the Missouri Professional Development (MOPD) system.

Navigators are now available to provide additional support to professionals using MOPD. The MOPD Navigators are able to assist with staff, director, and trainer questions or concerns.

Professionals can call or email the same contact information for MOPD to reach the MOPD Navigators. The MOPD contact information is 573-526-8273 or MOPD@dese.mo.gov.

NEW! Child Care Subsidy Reports

The agenda is posted on [the ECSAC meeting webpage](#) and other materials will be posted approximately one week before the meeting.

NEW! Higher Education Listening Tour Report

This past year, as part of the OOC initiatives to promote early childhood careers, the Early Childhood Innovation Center at UMKC visited 35 colleges and universities offering degrees in early childhood education or child development to learn how to support students moving into and across the early childhood sector.

[A report of the listening tour activities is now available on the OOC webpage.](#)

NEW! 2023 Early Care & Education Workforce Report

The 2023 Early Care & Education Workforce Report is now available. This report contains an analysis of the characteristics of the early childhood workforce, qualifications of professionals, and supports available to professionals in 2023.

[The full report](#) is now available on the OOC webpage.

NEW! Selected Occupations Chart for Administrators

OOC has been developing several reports for child care subsidy that are now available online.

A copy of the quarterly quality and financial reports sent to the federal agency are available under “Quality Progress Reports” and “Quarterly Financial Reports (696)” on [the Child Care and Development Fund webpage](#).

Monthly reports with subsidy information, such as child counts, expenditures, reason for care, provider types and locations of children served, etc., for February through August 2024 are now available under “Monthly Data Reports” on [the Child Care and Development Fund webpage](#).

RESOURCE! Safe Kids Tip Sheet: Asking Saves Kids (ASK) About Gun Safety

According to [the American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#), firearms are the leading cause of death in children and youth birth to 24 years of age in the United States.

[This tip sheet from Safe Kids worldwide](#) helps parents know what to ASK, how to ASK, and why you ASK friends and family about safe gun storage to keep their children safe.

This is an easy to remember method to use to help families take active responsibility in ensuring the environments where their children live and play are safe.

RESOURCE! Growing Healthy Communities Podcast

The Growing Healthy Communities podcast is a production of [Missouri Department of Mental Health Children's Division](#). This podcast is for parents and community members to better support youth in Missouri. Licensed professionals and individuals with lived experiences present topics identified by parents, caregivers, and community members that address the needs of youth and families in Missouri.

View [the informational flyer](#) for more details and a link to listen.

RESOURCE! Governor’s Council on Disability

The Selected Occupations Chart for Administrators is now available. This aspirational chart is for administrators that work directly with staff who serve children and families in those same fields. The chart is intended to be used by policy makers, higher education leaders, and other stakeholders to strengthen Missouri’s professional development systems.

Visit [the OOC webpage](#) to review the chart.

REMINDER! October is Safe Sleep Awareness Month

October is Safe Sleep Awareness month. The following tips can help keep sleeping babies safe:

- Swaddled babies should only be placed on their back.
- Weighted swaddles or other weighted objects are not recommended.
- When baby shows any attempt at rolling over, swaddling is not appropriate and unsafe.

Under the federal Safe Sleep for Babies Act unsafe, potentially dangerous sleep products, such as in bed sleepers, inclined

The Governor's Council on Disability promotes full participation and inclusion of Missourians with disabilities in all aspects of community life by educating citizens, businesses, schools, universities, and others of their rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

If your business employs individuals who have a disability, check out the resources available through this Council. Information about compliance with the ADA and assistive technology to maximize the productivity of people with disabilities is provided. For more information, visit [the Governor's Council on Disability](#) webpage.

REMINDER! Missouri Parent Education Curriculum Partners and PAT Affiliate Programs

All Missouri school districts provide a Parents as Teachers Parent Education Program using the research-based curricula for implementing family personal visits and adhere to the Early Childhood Development Act (ECDA) Administrative Manual.

Some school districts may also choose to become Parents as Teachers Affiliate Programs. Affiliate Programs adhere to additional requirements established by the Parents as Teachers National Center.

For more information about Missouri Parent Education designations, visit [the Parent Education webpage](#) and click on the designations tab.

REMINDER! Fully Funded CDA Opportunities with QAR Participation

sleepers, loungers, and compact sleepers are no longer legal as of mid-2022.

Learn more in [this free Safe to Sleep tool kit](#).

UPDATE! Missouri Family Resources

[Missouri Family Resources](#) has been used to conduct over 20,000 searches for local programs and resources since its launch in January!

Community stakeholders across the state have helped to add over 950 programs to the database, working with the Office of Childhood to make Missouri Family Resources a comprehensive resource directory for families with young children.

Visit [the OOC webpage](#) to learn more.

UPDATED! Child Care Subsidy Terms & Conditions

The terms and conditions for providers participating in the Child Care Subsidy Program have been updated to reflect current federal requirements. The [revised terms and conditions](#) are in effect as of October 1, 2024 for current and future subsidy contracted providers.

All subsidy-contracted providers are asked to



Early childhood centers, school district prekindergarten programs, and licensed family-child care providers interested in increasing the quality of their programs are eligible to join Missouri's Quality Assurance Report (QAR).

Participating programs receive Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) assessments, one-on-one coaching, access to quality supports and resources, and fully funded training opportunities for staff who are interested in obtaining a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential for infant/toddler, preschool, or family child care.

This CDA opportunity for staff will fund the cost of training, materials, and application fee with two options available: CDA with CLASS with nine Early Childhood Education college credits or CDA with CLASS with clock hours.

To learn more visit [the QAR webpage](#).

REMINDER! 2024 Statewide ShakeOut Earthquake Drill

On **Thursday, October 17**, schools are encouraged to participate in the annual Central U.S. ShakeOut earthquake drill. Hundreds of thousands of Missouri students participate each year. Participants will practice the "Drop, Cover, Hold On" technique to protect themselves in the event of an earthquake. Remember you should:

review these terms and conditions closely to ensure compliance with the requirements.

REMINDER! Missouri First Steps Videos

The First Steps program [has two videos available online](#).

[One video](#) is for parents to get an understanding of the program and [the other video](#) is for referral sources. The videos are available in English and Spanish. Early childhood professionals are encouraged to watch the referral sources video and share the parent video as appropriate when a referral to First Steps is discussed with parents.

REMINDER! CDC Recommends RSV Shots For Infants

Infants under 8 months of age are recommended to receive an RSV antibody shot ahead of their first RSV season, according to [guidance from the CDC](#).

For mothers who have already received a maternal RSV vaccine during any previous pregnancy, CDC does not currently recommend you get another dose of RSV vaccine when you are pregnant again. Instead, it is recommended that the baby should receive the shot.

- DROP to your hands and knees
- COVER your head and neck with your hands and arms under a table or desk if you can
- HOLD ON until the shaking stops

Experts say Drop, Cover, Hold On is the best protection from falling debris, which is the most likely cause of injury during an earthquake in developed nations with modern building standards.

To learn more and to register for the event, visit Shakeout.org/centralus.

REMINDER! Why Lead Poisoning Prevention is Pertinent to Early Childhood Educators and Parents

Lead can harm a child's growth, behavior, and learning ability. Lead poisoning can cause deficits affecting a child's education, resulting in a higher rate of special education placement and impacts the child's ability for academic achievement. Children will need help overcoming deficits caused by lead poisoning.

Because of these lifelong deficits, early identification is critical. Encourage blood lead testing for your families.

If you have additional questions on the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, visit [DHSS's Lead Poisoning webpage](#). Emails can be sent to Teresa.Wortmann@health.mo.gov or Maggie.Burns@health.mo.gov. By phone, dial 573-751-6102.

REMINDER! Child Care Comprehensive Background Screening

REMINDER! Allowable Uses of Relief Funds

OOC staff are conducting fiscal monitoring of child care providers who received relief funds. Providers should check their email often and respond accordingly if selected for a monitoring activity. Child care providers who received relief funds need to be familiar with the Terms & Conditions for each grant awarded.

All Terms & Conditions for relief-funded grants on [the Closed Funding Opportunities webpage](#).

REMINDER! Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is available for every child ages birth to 5 years in Missouri. A parent or guardian can register their child on [the Imagination Library national webpage](#). Books will be mailed directly to the home of registered children at no cost to the family.

Dolly Parton visited Missouri in August to celebrate the Imagination Library of Missouri's success. [The livestream recording of Dolly's visit to Missouri](#) is provided by Kansas City PBS and is still available to view.

All child care programs are encouraged to review staff files to check the date of background screening eligibility determinations. Eligibility letters expire five years from the date of the letter (not the date of fingerprints). Thirty to 60 days prior to the expiration date of an eligible letter, the provider/director will need to submit a new [Comprehensive Background Check Notification form](#) for all child care staff that need an eligibility re-determination.

Visit [the Back Ground Check Process webpage](#) to learn more about the five-year redetermination process.

REMINDER! Appropriate Outdoor Equipment

For Licensed Family Home & Group Home/Center Child Care Providers.

Outdoor play is important for developing a child's physical and mental health. As a child care provider, you are responsible for providing the equipment necessary for outdoor play that meets the needs of all ages that are in your care. It is important to take into consideration that equipment is available and safe for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-agers.

Find more information on [the Rules and Laws webpage](#).

Monthly MOPD Quick Tip

Directors can assign training to staff members in the MOPD system.

This feature makes it easy to know that staff are getting the training topics they need to complete. Follow [the MOPD Instructions](#) for the topic 'Register Staff for Training', currently on page 114 to complete these steps

Spotlight on Success

Spotlight on Success aims to share stories from local programs that are building community partnerships in order to strengthen and coordinate childhood programs.



Photo Credit:

Raytown C-2 School District has expanded their Missouri Parents as Teachers Affiliate Parent Education Program by accepting federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funding. Beginning in March 2024, the district has been able to continue to offer universal home visiting services with state funds while also being able to expand their staff to provide additional families with services through MIECHV federal funds. This allows the district to serve an additional 36 families that meet the MIECHV eligibility criteria.

This effort is a culmination of a collaboration between Raytown C-2 School District and DESE. The district was already operating an affiliate program located in a MIECHV eligible county prior to this funding opportunity. DESE home visiting staff worked to assist the district with the expansion of services while continuing to preserve the intent and purpose of both the Parent Education and MIECHV programs.

With the expansion of staff and the ability to serve more families, Raytown C-2 School District can take a unique approach with parent educators functioning on a hybrid model, serving families under both MIECHV model and the Parent Education program. They have also been able to increase the number of group connection activities and hire an additional Spanish-speaking parent educator.

'Tisha Hensel, Parents as Teachers Coordinator said, "We are so grateful for the ways that accepting MIECHV funding has increased our ability to provide a high level of service to a greater number of families, to give adequate time to parent educators to support those families' needs and to expand and strengthen our group connection opportunities. We know that this funding is having a direct impact on the families we serve."

UPDATE! Preschool Development Grant



The Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) provides funding over three years to coordinate a more effective, high-quality early childhood system that better prepares Missouri children for success.

Each month, the OOC hosts a live webinar to provide updates and information about the PDG B-5 to stakeholders. A [recording](#) and the [PowerPoint slides](#) from the September 2024 webinar are available in case you were unable to attend and wish to hear the information. You can view archived webinars here:

- [August 2024](#)
- [July 2024](#)
- [June 2024](#)
- [May 2024](#)
- [April 2024](#)
- [March 2024](#)

The [PDG B-5 dashboard](#) is also updated monthly. This dashboard provides an at-a-glance look at priority areas, budget status, and key accomplishments.

PDG B-5 Monthly Webinar

Join us for the next PDG B-5 Stakeholder webinar on **Tuesday, October 29, 2024**, from noon to 12:45 p.m. to learn more and ask questions. You can [access the webinar](#) in a Google Chrome or Safari web browser. Do not view in Internet Explorer. We hope you can participate!

For questions about the stakeholder webinar series, or suggestions for topics in future webinars, email us at Childhood@dese.mo.gov.

Archived Editions of Childhood Connections

[Visit the OOC webpage to find previous editions of Childhood Connections.](#)

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, veteran status, mental or physical disability, or any other basis prohibited by statute in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Director of Civil Rights Compliance and MOA Coordinator (Title VI/Title VII/Title IX/504/ADA/ADAAA/Age Act/GINA/USDA Title VI), 5th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; email civilrights@dese.mo.gov.



DESE Office of Childhood | 205 Jefferson Street - 1st Floor | Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Report Spam](#)